To Our Readers

Gary P. Zola, Editor pp. vii-x

Article

A Century of Southern Jewish Historiography

Mark K. Bauman pp. 3-78

The historical reconstruction of southern Jewish history has changed dramatically over more than a century. In this pioneering historiographical essay, Bauman explicates the development of the field, poses critical questions, and suggests directions for future research. His close reading of the sources sheds light not only on this burgeoning area of study, but on the broader patterns of American Jewish historical literature.

Documentary Analyses

Rabbi Morris Newfield: Ambassador to the Gentiles, a Balancing Act Scott M. Langston pp. 79–88

This essay considers Jewish-Christian relations through the analysis of two documents written by Rabbi Morris Newfield of Birmingham, Alabama. Langston's examination of these documents reveals that as an ambassador to the gentiles, or ethnic broker, the rabbi had to delicately balance the necessity of occasionally challenging Christians with the need for working together with them. Diversity among Christian groups further complicated matters, causing Newfield to seek ways to successfully negotiate these issues without creating a backlash against the local Jewish community.

A.E. Frankland's History of the 1873 Yellow Fever Epidemic in Memphis, Tennessee

Alan M. Kraut pp. 89-98

In 1873, Memphis, Tennessee, suffered a yellow fever epidemic. A.E. Frankland, an officer in the local chapter of B'nai B'rith and President of the Hebrew Hospital Relief Association, risked his life to relieve the suffering of Jews and gentiles alike. Kraut analyzes Frankland's personal history of the epidemic and frames the memoir in the context of Southern Jewish history and the history of American medicine.

From Rebbetzin to Rabbi: The Journey of Paula Ackerman

Shuly Rubin Schwartz pp. 99–106

One of the most moving episodes in the history of women's ordination can be found in the short-lived rabbinic career of Paula Herskovitz Ackerman, a rebbetzin who served as rabbi in Mississippi for three years in the early 1950s after her husband's sudden death. Thanks to her sense of history, we can today read the letters she wrote shortly after his passing. Through them, we learn of the various factors that went into her decision to serve as rabbi. Her words, as analyzed by Schwartz, provide a rare window into the challenges and possibilities initially associated with the pulpit rabbinate as a career for women.

Judah P. Benjamin and Slavery

Maury Wiseman pp. 107-114

Historians have often ignored or mitigated Judah Benjamin's views on slavery. Benjamin's speech on the Kansas Bill of 11 March 1858 provides the most comprehensive legal articulation of his views on the topic and upholds the interpretation that he was a firm proponent of slavery. Wiseman's careful examination of the speech within the context of Benjamin's life and times adds to our understanding of this important and complex historical figure.

Book Reviews

Jeanne E. Abrams, Jewish Women Pioneering the Frontier Trail: A History in the American West

reviewed by David S. Koffman pp. 115-116

Jocelyn Cohen and Daniel Soyer, trans. and eds., My Future is in America: Autobiographies of Eastern European Jewish Immigrants reviewed by Gil Ribak pp. 116–118

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Zvi Ganin, An Uneasy Relationship: American Jewish Leadership and Israel, 1948–1957

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Shuly Rubin Schwartz, The Rabbi's Wife: The Rebbetzin in American Jewish Life

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Cornelia Wilhelm, Deutsche Juden in Amerika: Bürgerliches Selbstbewusstsein und jüdische Identität in den Orden B'nai B'rith und Treue Schwestern, 1843–1914

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